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SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: I-CERP BUILDING MORE THAN
PROJECTS

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Richard Bell for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

[11](#). (U) This is a PRT Salah ad Din reporting cable
coordinated with the partner Brigade 1/101 BCT.

Summary

[12](#). (C) The Iraqi - Commanders Emergency Response Program
(I-CERP) has been a great success in Salah ad Din province,
helping to quickly address critical project implementation
needs. While the benefits that the projects bring to
communities are important, an upside is how the bottom-up
process used by the PRT/BCT to obtain Iraqi project approval
has enhanced communication between local, provincial, and GOI
ministry officials. End Summary.

[13](#). (C) I-CERP funds are a pool of Iraqi money that Brigade
Commanders can use to address critical needs in communities
that were not likely to be met by the provincial governments
due to the long lead-time required by the normal
capital-project approval and execution cycle. Initially, the
bulk of the money is to be used to show local communities
quick progress delivering basic services. In Salah ad Din,
which received almost USD 12 million, the I-CERP program is
addressing a diverse range of project needs, from repair of a
major water-treatment plant in Baiji to an asphalt plant in
Samarra and numerous potable-water improvements throughout
the province.

[14](#). (C) The Brigade Commander agreed that all infrastructure
projects would need approval from both the Provincial
Reconstruction and Development Committee (PRDC) and
local-level (i.e. District) authorities. To allay fears that
this requirement would slow project implementation, the PRDC
committed to turning projects around in one week. Except on
large projects that it feels require modification, the PRDC
has been true to its word.

Process Builds Communication

[15](#). (C) The process agreed upon among the PRDC, PRT and BCT
is straightforward, transparent, and reflects the priorities
of local officials. District-level CF units and satellite
PRT offices, in close consultation with local officials,
choose projects to be executed with I-CERP funds. Seeing
this as an opportunity to improve local ability to manage the
project-nomination process for provincial capital projects,
satellite PRT offices and BCT leaders have stressed that
local officials must prioritize their requests. After
developing a prioritized project list, the local council and
the local ministry director general sign off on the I-CERP
project, which then moves to the BCT for approval. The BCT
does not consider any projects without the appropriate
signatures of local councils and local ministry directors.
The prioritization of needs has been a useful exercise for
local officials; many are now using this process and lists to
develop their requests for capital-project funding from the

provincial government.

¶6. (C) Once the Brigade approves the funding (NOTE: This step is more of a legal review than a judgment on the project itself. End Note.), the projects are presented to the PRDC for approval. PRT and BCT officials present new I-CERP projects for PRDC consideration on a weekly basis. In some cases, approval comes quickly; however, the PRDC has requested modifications on a number of proposals. On the Baiji water-treatment plant, for example, the PRDC met with engineers and the Mayor to hash out project details and reached an agreement, even though this resulted in a greatly changed scope of work. Additionally, local officials had a large say in making those changes, something not frequently seen in the past.

Comment

¶7. (C) While the I-CERP program does not require approval of projects by local officials, doing so helped to convince the PRDC to cooperate to expedite the process and address frequently-voiced local concerns that the provincial government does not listen to their needs. The enhanced communication between local and provincial officials facilitated by this process may be as important a result as the projects themselves. Our insistence on prioritized lists has paid dividends as local officials are using lists developed for I-CERP projects to guide their development of provincial capital-project requests. End Comment.
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